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Santa Cruz County Unanimously Approves Single-Use Bag Reduction Ordinance

(September 13, 2011) Santa Cruz, CA – [Save Our Shores](#) (SOS), the leader in ocean advocacy and citizen action on the Central Coast, applauds the unanimous decision by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors today to approve a county-wide ban on single-use plastic bags from retailers and food vendors. Plastic bags are a harmful, petroleum-based plastic product of convenience, are not biodegradable, are ingested by marine species, and are constantly found polluting the waterways and communities surrounding the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

The ordinance, originally spearheaded by Supervisor Mark Stone and diligently written by a task force that included Save Our Shores, imposes a 10 cent fee on paper bags, bans single-use plastic bags from retailers and food vendors, and encourages use of reusable bags.

Public comment and support of the ban was plentiful at the meeting this morning, where members of Save Our Shores, Environment California, Saves the Waves Coalition, Surfrider Santa Cruz Chapter, Sustainable Salinas, and citizens of the Santa Cruz community spoke in support of the ban. Carolyn Ruldolph, owner of Charlie Hong Kong restaurant, spoke in support of the ban and shared her own restaurant's successful experience of transitioning away from single-use plastic bags.

Today, the County of Santa Cruz joins the ranks of other counties and cities in the state of California that have passed similar bans on single-use plastic bags such as the County of Los Angeles, the County of Marin, and the Cities of San Jose, Palo Alto, Los Angeles, Manhattan Beach, Oakland, Fairfax, Malibu, Long Beach, and more.

“The plastic bag problem is a state-wide issue, but because the state legislature failed to get it done, we had to move forward locally to make this happen,” said Supervisor Mark Stone at the meeting. “I thank the county staff and the task force for getting this done. In addition, SOS has been amazing and a real catalyst in this process.”

Says Laura Kasa, Executive Director of Save Our Shores, “I thank the leadership of this Board of Supervisors for taking on this issue and for diligently following through in order to protect our ocean from this harmful product.”

Save Our Shores has been working with local leaders, businesses, and residents for over two years to garner support for this ban and will continue to advocate for bans on single-use plastic bags in each jurisdiction around the Sanctuary. Contact saveourshores.org for more information.

About Save Our Shores:

Save Our Shores is the Central Coast leader in caring for the marine environment through ocean awareness, advocacy and citizen action. Our core initiatives are Plastic Pollution, Clean Boating, and Ocean Awareness. Over the last 30 years, Save Our Shores helped to establish the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, prevent offshore oil drilling and cruise ship pollution, and today focuses on educating youth about our local watersheds, tackling pollution on our beaches and rivers, implementing our renowned DockWalker program, and providing our community with educated and inspired Sanctuary Stewards. For more information visit: www.saveourshores.org.

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